

MARWIC

T · I · M · E · S

MID-ATLANTIC REGION SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN

DC's CHILDREN'S NATIONAL MEDICAL CENTER WIC STAFF PARTICIPATES IN HISPANIC HEALTH FAIR

By Sara Beckwith, MS, RD, LD, CLS

With the leaves changing color and temperatures beginning to cool, autumn is an excellent time to host a health fair. Children have started the school year, and it is a great time for the entire family to focus on health.

MedStar Family Choice, a Managed Care Organization serving the District of Columbia and Maryland, hosted a Hispanic Health Fair and Bazaar on October 19. The event featured live entertainment, health screenings including blood pressure, body mass index (BMI), and lead, health education, and children's activities.

WIC staff members from Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC, took part in this event, providing information about the WIC Program and breastfeeding to event-goers. Muriel Raglin, WIC nutritionist, and Santos Benitez, WIC technician, provided nutrition and breastfeeding brochures and give-aways to local families. Helping promote access to healthy food, the benefits of breastfeeding, and the importance of healthy eating, Muriel and Santos provided much-needed services to Hispanic families. ■



FAIRY NICE DAY — WIC Technician Santos Benitez smiles with families at the Hispanic Health Fair and Bazaar.

VA/MD WIC DIETETIC INTERNSHIP PROGRAM GRADUATES ANOTHER CLASS

By Kathleen M. Sergent, MA, RD, Director, VA/MD WIC Dietetic Internship Program, VA Department of Health

Congratulations to the most recent graduates of the Virginia/Maryland WIC Dietetic Internship Program. The internship program is open to applicants from the Virginia and Maryland WIC Programs. The internship is an 11-month part-time program begun in 1991. Since then, 122 WIC employees have graduated from the program.

Each intern participates in three major rotations — clinical, foodservice management and community nutrition. The intern works part time in the WIC Program during the internship. Connie Webster, MPH, RD is the Internship Coordinator for Maryland. Kathy Sergent, RD is the Internship Director. ■



CONGRATS GRADS — Pictured are (front row, left to right) Edita Tituana (MD), Alison Liggett (VA), Marbella Moreno-McCarthy (VA), (back row, left to right) Vicky Bandy (VA), Murray Wood (VA), Kelli Zentkovitch (MD), Jennifer Yagurez (MD), Kathy Sergent RD, Internship Director, and Samantha Ronk (VA).

WEST VIRGINIA WIC AGENCY PARTNERS WITH THE MINERAL COUNTY LIBRARY FOR A 4TH OF JULY FOOD CELEBRATION

By Pamela Riggelman, Shenandoah Community Health Systems WIC Program Outreach Coordinator

Once upon a time, the summer reading program brought families to the library for "Celebration of Red, White & Blue Foods." On July 2, the Trinity Lutheran Church came alive through a partnership between West Virginia's Shenandoah Community Health Systems Mineral County WIC Program and Mineral County Library.

Children were introduced to red, white and blue foods by making a parfait with strawberries, yogurt, and blueberries followed by the story, "I will Never, Not Ever, Eat a Tomato," by Lauren Child. To encourage trying new fresh vegetables from the local farmers' market, the

Continued on page 9



RED, WHITE & BLUE FOODS — Mineral County children kicked off the 4th of July weekend with nutrition education, science and literacy activities.

WINTER 2015

■ Virginia's Richmond City WIC Celebrates BreastfeedingPage 3

■ EBTShopper™ Mobile Phone App Simplifies WIC ShoppingPage 5

■ New Jersey WIC Annual Meeting: Supporting and Strengthening NJ WIC Families: 40 Years & BeyondPage 7

■ Baby Friendly Hospitals in DelawarePage 8

■ Pennsylvania WIC Success Story: Put to the Test...Yields Breastfeeding Success!Page 11



By Kelly Mannherz, MS, CLC

At a recent All Employee Meeting, staff at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office celebrated the WIC Program's 40 years of success in providing nutritious supplemental foods, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and healthcare referrals to women, infants, and children. The event began with the showing of a video which highlighted these key benefits of the Program, followed by an interactive game based on the Food Network program, Chopped.

During the game, which was developed by the MARO WIC staff, teams were asked to develop a creative, kid-friendly dinner idea using the secret basket ingredients of canned tuna, whole wheat bread, whole fresh pumpkin, and cheddar cheese. Teams were also encouraged to use other WIC-approved foods from the pantry, such as whole wheat pasta, tofu, fruits and vegetables, and brown rice. Each team then described their winning dish to a panel of judges which included Regional Administrator Pat Dombroski, Deputy Regional Administrator Diana Limbacher, Special Nutrition Programs Division Director Jim Harmon, and School Nutrition Programs Branch Chief Roberta Hodsdon.

The judges evaluated each group's imaginary meal based on creativity, the team's adherence to the time limit, and their use of additional WIC-approved foods from the pantry. The winning team created a sensational meal which was both WIC-friendly and kid-friendly, and each team member was awarded a reusable grocery tote. The event was a resounding success. ■



CREATIVE BIRTHDAY BASH — MARO staff celebrated WIC's 40th anniversary with a game based on the Food Network program Chopped.



WHO WILL BE CHOPPED? — MARO staff member Nydza Santiago presented her team's Chopped meal idea to the judges panel of (left to right) School Nutrition Programs Branch Chief Roberta Hodsdon, Deputy Regional Administrator Diana Limbacher, Regional Administrator Pat Dombroski, and Special Nutrition Programs Division Director Jim Harmon.



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PENNSYLVANIA'S COMMUNITY ACTION SOUTHWEST CELEBRATES 40 YEARS OF WIC

By Rachel DeWolf, Breastfeeding Peer Counselor

Pennsylvania's Community Action Southwest celebrated WIC's 40th anniversary by hosting open houses in the Washington and Monongahela WIC clinics. The events were well attended, with more than 90 WIC participants, agency employees, community members and former WIC staff stopping by the sites.

In Washington, WIC clinic staff decorated the office and organized the day's festivities.

Children and adults alike were invited to compete for prizes in WIC trivia games and Plinko, get weighed by a nutritionist, and interact with the clinic staff while learning about nutrition at various displays. Certified lactation counselors were also on hand to discuss breastfeeding and the peer counselor program. Participants were entered into a drawing for door prizes, but even those who did not win enjoyed birthday cake, refreshments, and healthy snacks and received educational fliers.

Karen Ringer, a WIC employee for 30 years, took visitors on a trip down memory lane, back to the days of no computers, hand-written checks, and even having to use an outhouse in one of the out-clinics. Her office, decorated with photos she had collected throughout her time with WIC, was a favorite stop for visitors.

While the WIC Program has changed throughout the years, it was important to the event organizers to share with the community what has stayed the same. Friendly and supportive staff offers a welcoming environment for those who come through the WIC office doors. ■



CHECK OUT THE TEES — WIC staffers Karen Ringer, Erin Barbetta, Debbie Patton and Angela Coppi show off their 40th anniversary t-shirts.



WELCOME — Clinic staff members Karen Ringer, Rachel Fagersten, and Angela Coppi ready to welcome visitors.

MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL OFFICE WIC TEAM WELCOMES NEW NUTRITIONIST

By Amy L. Holtan, MA, RD, LDN

As of September 2014, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office (MARO) WIC Team includes Nutritionist Kelly Mannherz, MS, CLC. Kelly is a member of the International Lactation Consultant Association, the United States Lactation Consultant Association, and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Kelly's WIC experience began with the New Jersey State WIC Program. Then she switched over to the local agency level where she was a WIC Coordinator in Trenton, NJ for four years. During her time there, she was grateful to increase her knowledge about breastfeeding and pediatric nutrition. Also, she was especially thankful to the bilingual staff which helped her to improve her Spanish. She was then better prepared to support the Spanish-speaking families of the program.

When asked why she chose to work with WIC, Kelly said, "While I was going through school I always knew that I wanted to work for WIC. I believe in the mission of the program and I know that good nutrition that starts with breastfeeding is paramount. Working for a program that provides a bright future for babies and children makes going to work each day a blessing. I've worked with so many inspirational people during my WIC career, including both WIC staff and program participants, who have taught me that WIC means so much more than supplemental food. The program and the dedicated people who work for it empower women and families to lead healthy lives."

Outside of work, Kelly enjoys running and recently completed the Disney Princess Half Marathon. She also enjoys rooting for the Philadelphia Phillies, Philadelphia Eagles, and Rutgers Football team, spoiling her nephew and two goddaughters, and hiking with her husband and their two dogs, Teddy and Tucker.

To contact Kelly, e-mail her at Kelly.Mannherz@fns.usda.gov or call 609-259-5123. Please feel free to introduce yourself to Kelly; she looks forward to meeting and working with all the MARO WIC Programs. ■



KELLY MANNHERZ

VIRGINIA'S RICHMOND CITY WIC CELEBRATES BREASTFEEDING

Virginia's Richmond City WIC held its annual Breastfeeding Celebration and had its highest turn out ever with 54 attendees.

Three stations were available for moms to circulate through. One station featured nutrition and healthy snacks to eat while breastfeeding. Nutritionist Michelle Henry offered a smoothie prepared with milk and fruits included in the WIC food package. The second station was the importance of hydration and sanitation while breastfeeding. The third station was offered by Bilingual Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Silvia Banocy, who addressed our Spanish speaking participants on the topics offered at the other two stations. In addition to stations, we had our very own breastfeeding mother and Nutritionist Associate share her invaluable story and experience as a single, exclusively breastfeeding mother.

Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator/ Nutritionist Vernessa Holmes and Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Melissa Parsons staffed the registration desk and were responsible for determining different categories for the award recognition and smooth execution of the agenda.

Our focus was to educate nursing and prenatal moms on how to successfully prepare food with the items available in their food packages. The menu for the day featured tuna salad, black bean and corn salad, fresh vegetables and fruits, cheese, whole wheat bread, trail mix (with WIC cereals), and celery stuffed with peanut butter and raisins.

Each participant was given a hand sanitizer and water bottle. New this year, was a table with gently used items donated by Health Department employees. Moms were able to take items they could use. Prizes were awarded to mothers for games played — longest breastfeeding career, breastfed the most children, and mom currently breastfeeding multiples. These gifts were provided by Richmond City WIC Coordinator Liz Snead, who made homemade burp cloths; Nutritionist Associate Rita Sheetz, who made popular "Hooter Hiders," and Vernessa Holmes, who provided personal care items. ■



KEEP CLEAN — Clients listening to a short teaching about the importance of hydration during pregnancy and lactation and keeping hands germ-free during breastfeeding and milk expression.

NEWS FROM NEW JERSEY'S BURLINGTON COUNTY WIC PROGRAM

By Dr. Deepti Das, PhD, Coordinator, and Leshette Williams, MS, RD, Assistant Coordinator

MADLINE MURRAY RETIRES After more than 30 years of dedicated service with the Burlington County WIC Program, Madeline Shultz Murray retired on October 31. "Mad" or "Maddie" as we all call her, was an integral part of the Burlington WIC Program. She held the position of Principal Account Clerk Typist which she proudly filled. More importantly, she was true to heart and would always give from her heart as we all knew it was from her love of people. "It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday."



FAREWELL — the Burlington WIC staff bids farewell to long-time employee Madeline Murray

We love you and will miss you Maddie. Enjoy and have a blessed retirement!

SOUTHERN NJ PERINATAL COOPERATIVE The Burlington County WIC Program would like to thank the Southern NJ Perinatal Cooperative for supporting the breastfeeding services for Burlington participants until FFY '14. The local agency accepted the Breastfeeding Grant for FFY '15. A lactation consultant and two peer counselors were hired to provide breastfeeding services. Lactation service hours at the main office are Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm with extended hours (8am-8pm) four times per month. Services are also provided at all 10 satellite sites.

AUGUST BREASTFEEDING CELEBRATION The Burlington County WIC lactation staff participated in "The Big Latch On" event held on August 2 in Medford, NJ, to kick-start World Breastfeeding Week. The event was attended by Peer Counselor Claudia Schanil. The Global Big Latch is an international event held in various areas where mothers come together and breastfeed simultaneously. Burlington County WIC lactation staff also hosted a table.

BURLINGTON COUNTY'S BEST PRACTICES The local agency continues to host "Smile NJ" monthly and a total of 178 children received dental care during FFY 2014. Nurse representatives from Nurse Family Partnership come twice a month to the administrative site to enroll first-time moms. A total of 127 pregnant moms were seen during the second half of FFY 2014. Staff participated in several health fairs, including Fort Dix/McGuire Air Force Base Expo, The Burlington County Farm Fair, and The Latino Services Health Fair. The staff distributed WIC outreach flyers and nutrition education materials at the events. ■

NEW JERSEY'S NORTH HUDSON WIC PROGRAM CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL FOOD DAY

On October 24, New Jersey's North Hudson Community Action Corporation WIC Program held its annual International Food Day celebration. It was a fun-filled day complete with foods and traditional crafts from around the world. In the spirit of the event, the classroom was festively decorated with flags of all the nations being represented.

WIC staff prepared delicious and healthy dishes that are staples of their native countries. Participants were enthusiastic to try the colorful variety of foods. This banquet style table consisted of foods ranging from hearty vegetable samosas from Pakistan, to colorful Mediterranean salads from Armenia, to sweet rice pudding from Dominican Republic and everything in between. As the staff served participants these ethnic delights, they gave a brief description and history of the cultures each food represented.

The celebration was not limited to just food. The staff proudly displayed customary dresses and fabrics from their native countries. These included a long women's gown from Kenya, a hand-made children's dress in the traditional colors from Cuba, hats from Venezuela, a vest from Colombia, a customary children's gown from Pakistan and soccer jerseys from various South American countries. A second table exhibited ethnic pottery from Mexico and Peru, books from Armenia, Peruvian dolls, and jewelry from Pakistan.

The event was a celebration of different cultures and appreciation for diversity. Participants were able to learn about and embrace a variety of nations that they were not aware of before, as well as further familiarizing themselves with the culture and customs of their friends and neighbors. The festivities truly captured the spirit of International Food Day. ■



WORLD PARTY — Chief Nutritionist Crystal Kilerciyan, Administrative Assistant Dorcas Gonzalez, and Program Coordinator Karen Lazarowitz celebrating International Food Day.



GLOBAL CULTURE — Intake Representatives Kimberly Rivera and Joanna Compres and Chief Nutritionist Crystal Kilerciyan celebrating International Food Day.

PUERTO RICO WIC HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON NUTRITION AND BREASTFEEDING

In celebration of World Breastfeeding Month and of 40 years of the WIC Program serving families, Puerto Rico WIC held the Second Annual Conference on Nutrition and Breastfeeding this past August. To celebrate this 40th anniversary, program staff was convened to participate in this professional development activity. Lectures offered during the event were directed to improve educational and guidance services to families participating in the program.

The following topics were covered in the lectures presented at the conference:

- Pediatric Gastroenterology, Handling of Reflux and Allergies in Infants and Children
- Breastfeeding in Common Situations: Plethora and Mastitis
- Motivational Interviewing
- Promotion and Breastfeeding Support
- Physical Activity in Pregnant Women, Infants and Pre-school Children
- Nutrition and Oral Health in Children
- Fostering Positive Relationships at the Workplace
- Speech Pathology/Dysphagia
- Breastfeeding in Special Conditions: Hypertension, Premature Babies, Hypothyroid and Down's Syndrome

PR WIC has a highly trained staff always ready to help families, which is why we carried out this activity. In the Second Annual Conference on Nutrition and Breastfeeding, program staff were able to acquire new strategies that can be incorporated into their routine functions; and also learn firsthand other health situations that affect the process of establishing adequate nutrition.

The event was a success and of great benefit for all those who attended. ■



SIGN OF SUCCESS — The promotional poster from the Second Annual Conference on Nutrition and Breastfeeding shows highlights of the day's activities.

VIRGINIA'S RICHMOND CITY WIC HOSTS BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT GROUP

On September 26, Virginia's Richmond City WIC Breastfeeding Peer Counselors held their first Breastfeeding Support Group. Twenty-one WIC breastfeeding and prenatal participants and family members came to the picnic, which was held at Forest Hill Park in Richmond. The weather was perfect and the conversation was even better!

Peer Counselor Cristina Garcia opened the support group with an explanation of our purpose, which is to educate and encourage mothers in their decision to breastfeed. Peer Counselors Melissa Parsons and Silvia Banocy gave a mini-class for our mothers addressing issues such as latch and breast massage and answered questions. The setting was relaxed, prompting the participants to feel more comfortable about opening up. With the help of our bilingual Breastfeeding Peer Counselor, Silvia Banocy, we were able to translate and reach out to our Spanish speaking population as well.

WIC foods were presented picnic-style to show variety and versatility in preparing the foods they receive. One of our main objectives is to teach about the importance of breastfeeding. At the same time, we want to build a strong community support amongst our participants. Moms exchanged information, phone numbers and ideas. We were pleased to have dads participating as well! ■



Pictured (left to right) are Breastfeeding Peer Counselors Cristina Garcia, Melissa Parsons, WIC client (and Silvia Banocy's daughter) Vanessa Sargent and Silvia Banocy holding her fully-breastfed grandson.

EBTSHOPPER™ MOBILE PHONE APP SIMPLIFIES WIC SHOPPING

By Heidi Staats, West Virginia State Outreach Coordinator

The West Virginia WIC Program celebrates ongoing efforts in establishing an improved system to let WIC help West Virginia families have what they need to live a healthy life. The EBTShopper™ mobile phone application (app) offers several improvements to the WIC shopping experience that benefits WIC participants, retail vendors and cashiers. The app is one of the newest and most attractive developments in WIC shopping.

The WIC EBTShopper™ mobile app enables WIC participants to verify the WIC eligibility of food items while shopping. In West Virginia, EBTShopper™ can also load the participant's current WIC benefits, allowing them to know with certainty what they can purchase using the benefits remaining on their eWIC card.

The mission for EBTShopper™ is to work together with the West Virginia WIC Program, participants and retailers to use technology and innovation to ensure WIC benefits are easy to use - ultimately advance the influence of WIC for improving healthy food choices during grocery shopping.

To get started, EBTShopper™ is downloaded from an app store or by visiting EBTShopper.com. Once the app is launched, the user will select West Virginia, and register the eWIC card number. Registering an eWIC card is safe and secure in EBTShopper. Plus registering a card allows the participant's current benefits to be loaded each time the app is used while shopping. While in the grocery store, participants use EBTShopper™ to scan or take a picture of product bar codes to verify that they are WIC eligible. Since food products have been pre-checked with EBTShopper™, it is smooth sailing at the register. ■

WIC participants are raving about EBTShopper™

"Every time I go to the store I have problems with what's approved or not. This app has helped me a lot, and now I don't hate going WIC shopping."

"EBTShopper doesn't just tell me if a product is WIC eligible – it tells me if it's WIC eligible for ME, and if I have the remaining benefits to purchase it. Thanks for such a great app."



EBTShopper™ was developed and is updated as well as maintained by JMPA, Inc. According to statistics shared by JMPA, close to 15% of West Virginia families participating in WIC are registered and using EBTShopper.

MORE VIRGIN ISLANDS WIC 40TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS WITH WIC KIDS AND 3RD GENERATIONS

By Lorna Concepcion, MS, RD

Virgin Island's WIC showcased more 40th anniversary celebrations with WIC children across the Islands. Story time with nutritionist Hanne Buckhalton at the Tutu Park Clinic, St. Thomas, gave children an opportunity to find out how the young dinosaur ate and how they can eat healthy too. Story Time sessions also included inviting staff from the Mental Health Division of the Department of Health at Charles Harwood to read stories to the children.

Children at the Charles Harwood Clinic, St. Croix, sang a song 'Stir, Stir, Stir Your Milk' to the tune of 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat' as they stirred their 1% milk in their instant pudding cups to make their pudding snacks. This was an activity to encourage children to shift to 1% milk and show parents ways to incorporate the milk into the child's diet. ■



STORY TIME — Nutritionist Hanne read a story to WIC kids at Tutu Park Mall Clinic, St. Thomas.

AN ODE TO WIC

By Donna Gottlieb MN Ed, RDN, Rutgers Medical School WIC Nutritionist

Written on the occasion of the New Jersey celebration of WIC's 40th anniversary

The White House Conference on Hunger
Recommended to decrease prematurity and the low birth weight TOLL
Should be our nation's health care GOAL!
So to give good food during GESTATION
The government needed to pass LEGISLATION.
Forty years ago WIC began after Senator Hubert HUMPHREY
Helped pass the bill for America's poor pregnant women and young
children to be hunger FREE.

WIC started out small but has GROWN
The seeds for good nutrition have been SOWN.

Now we have WIC throughout our great LAND
Providing nutrition education, checks for food and
Giving families a helping HAND.

WIC has helped reduce the RATES
Of babies born before their due DATES
Helped decrease children's iron DEFICIENCY
With our education, outreach and computer EFFICIENCY.

Now we have WIC throughout our great LAND
Providing nutrition education, checks for food and
Giving families a helping HAND.

We teach that mama's milk is the BEST
So more babies are now put to the BREAST.
Immunize, immunize, immunize is our CHANT
To continue we need more money in our GRANT.

Now we have WIC throughout our great LAND
Providing nutrition education, checks for food and
Giving families a helping HAND! ■

PENNSYLVANIA'S LANCASTER COUNTY WIC PROGRAM TEACHES SHOPPING ON A BUDGET

By Natalie Oster, Outreach Coordinator

In March, Pennsylvania's Lancaster County WIC received a grant from Share Our Strength to implement "Cooking Matters at the Store." The program teaches key food shopping skills like buying fruits and vegetables on a budget, comparing unit prices, reading food labels and identifying whole grains. The tour was followed with a \$10 challenge to see who could buy the most produce using their new shopping skills.

Lancaster WIC staff encouraged participants to sign up for shopping tours during appointments and during several WIC community events. The tours were offered in six different high-volume WIC stores throughout Lancaster County.

Clients learned the benefits of buying local, in-season produce and the pros and cons of buying fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables. Comparing unit prices was another tool used in learning how to get the most for your money. One participant commented, "I learned so much! I didn't realize how cheap a serving of fruits and vegetables actually was!"

Participants also learned how to identify whole grains not by the color of the bread or the label used for marketing, but by identifying the first ingredient on the ingredient list. This skill was also useful when looking for whole grain cereals, tortillas, rice and pastas.

The food label portion of the tour helped participants to determine serving size, fat, calorie, sugar and sodium content. One client stated, "I thought fat was the only important thing on the food label." She felt confident about looking for other information after the tour. Many participants were amazed at the small amount for a serving size. For example, many were surprised that the average serving size of a bowl of cereal should be about the size of a fist. Others were shocked at the sodium content in canned foods, but both participants and nutritionists shared ideas for limiting sodium during food preparation.

The tours were a great way for WIC nutritionists to provide hands-on nutrition education for buying healthy foods on a budget. Participants on the tour were enthusiastic about their new knowledge and the opportunity to put that knowledge to the test next time they use their WIC checks at the grocery store! We can't think of a better way to sum up our experience than the words of one Lancaster mom, "The tour was AWESOME! I learned things I never considered." ■



TOUR TIME — WIC Nutritionist Clarence Carper explains the benefits of choosing low-fat dairy.

WEST VIRGINIA'S SHENANDOAH VALLEY MINERAL COUNTY WIC PROGRAM PARTNERS WITH THE STATE REGION III HOMEFINDING SPECIALIST TO EDUCATE FOSTER PARENTS ABOUT WIC

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources requires potential foster/adoptive providers to complete PRIDE training. PRIDE stands for "Parent's Resource for Information, Development and Education." PRIDE is a nationally recognized training program that is utilized by many states to educate potential foster/adoptive parents. PRIDE seeks to give families information and tools to help parent abused and neglected children, with an emphasis on the unique issues these children face.

A panel discussion is held during the final session of a PRIDE training round. This panel is typically made up of child welfare staff, seasoned foster/adoptive parents, and community service providers. The purpose is to allow potential providers to ask questions they may still have about the process, and also to educate them in regards to resources available to assist in caring for children placed in their home.

Pamela Riggelman, Outreach Coordinator for the Shenandoah WIC Program, has participated in several panel discussions for the Region III/Burlington PRIDE training over the past few years. Pamela has educated potential providers about the WIC Program, and its availability to foster children. Aside from sharing her professional knowledge, Pamela has also been open to sharing her personal experiences as a child growing up in foster care. Her unique perspective has brought valuable knowledge to future foster/adoptive parents, and her participation is greatly appreciated. ■



FOSTER PARENTS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE — Pamela Riggelman, Outreach Coordinator with Shenandoah Valley WIC Program, offers not only professional expertise, but also personal experience, when educating foster parents about the WIC Program.

DC WIC CELEBRATES THANKSGIVING WITH WIC FOODS AND FOOD SAFETY

By Gwen McNail, Lisle Cole, Marion Flores LN MPH, Akua Odi Boateng MS RD LD, and Jessie Lupo, RD

As part of helping families prepare for Thanksgiving every year, Mary's Center organizes a Thanksgiving Drive and distributes turkey, perishable products and canned goods so participants can celebrate the upcoming holidays with a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. This year, the DC WIC staff at the Ontario Road site held a cooking event as participants picked up their packages.

Clinic staff demonstrated ways WIC foods can be incorporated into the Thanksgiving meal, such as a brown rice side dish instead of potatoes, fruits and vegetables used as sides, in stuffing, and as the appetizer and dessert.

There was also extensive education on the importance of food safety during preparation, serving and storing food. Participants enjoyed sampling the dishes and were excited to take home the recipes! ■

The tasty menu included:
Appetizer - hot spinach dip on sour dough bread
Entrée - turkey with stuffing
Vegetables - string beans and corn
Starch - brown rice and giblet gravy
Bread - hot dinner rolls
Dessert - apple and sweet potato pie



HOME COOKING WIC-STYLE — WIC Staff Gwen and Lisle with other Mary's Center Staff Margaret and Alejandra prepping the turkey for the class at the Ontario Road Kitchen.

VIRGINIA WIC HAS COME A LONG WAY...

By Sheila Brewer, Vendor Compliance Manager, Virginia WIC Program

In September, the Virginia WIC Program served as the host to several other state agencies that are still in the planning stage for implementing their own version of WIC EBT. Representatives from Alabama, Arizona, Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands and the Mid-Atlantic WIC Regional Office spent two full days learning about the Virginia WIC Program's EBT experience. A total of 18 individuals from these state agencies attended the Virginia WIC EBT Showcase event. A range of topics were covered during these two days, including:

- Discussion of the operational and administrative challenges when both a new Management Information System and eWIC processing capabilities are simultaneously implemented
- Strategies for providing intense (week-long) training sessions (over three months) for over 600 local WIC staff
- A reflection of "lessons learned" and discussion of what the Program would do differently, if we could turn back the implementation time clock
- A discussion of the many new resources for both eWIC cardholders and retail stores which were successfully developed by the program
- An opportunity to gain firsthand exposure in using the eWIC benefit card at both a stand beside and integrated retail store setting was provided.

Although the Virginia WIC Program printed our last food instruments May 2014, it seems like ages since we made this transition. Overall, the transition to eWIC has been a smooth one. During the WIC EBT Showcase, two WIC coordinators facilitated a candid discussion about how their workload has changed. It was phenomenal to hear their overwhelming enthusiasm about moving to eWIC payment method. The WIC coordinators offered many pluses with very few, if any, minuses. Our eWIC cardholders and families love the flexibility that eWIC benefit cards offer them. Eliminating the stigma of using paper food instruments has truly transformed the WIC Program and its operations.

All WIC Program staff stated they would never go back to using paper food instruments now that they know firsthand the many benefits eWIC provides to delivering nutritious foods to eligible women, infants and children. ■

NEW JERSEY WIC ANNUAL MEETING: SUPPORTING AND STRENGTHENING NJ WIC FAMILIES: 40 YEARS & BEYOND

The NJ WIC Program sponsored its 3rd Annual Meeting on October 27, 2014. Planned as a day to inspire and re-energize the more than 450 NJ WIC staff members; the words "high energy" might be an understatement. The reoccurring message was simple – "it is all about our participants and providing exceptional customer service."

Electra Moses, the new New Jersey WIC Director, set the tone for the day as she acknowledged the value of providing that positive initial WIC experience. Electra acknowledged those staff members whose primary role includes answering the phone and greeting a participant as they enter the reception area for WIC services.

The local WIC agency staff presented highlights and memorable moments that reflect our past, acknowledged our present, and created a vision of the future. All that and more happened prior to the skill building sessions. The meeting was planned to reflect our value for creating a healthy environment – despite the challenges! Yes, you guessed it, the opportunity for a fun physical activity session, titled "Invest in Yourself" was included.

Did we mention that the audience responded with rave reviews for both of the nationally known speakers that engaged the audience in sessions to improve our customer service skills? Adolph Brown, Psy.D presented a session titled, "Don't Judge a Book by Its Cover." Pam McCarthy delighted the audience with her wit and knowledge as she guided the audience through the Six Principles of Influence.

Other fun facts we shared include:

- NJ WIC staff has almost 5,000 years of combined WIC experience.
- 20 local a staff that have provided 30 or more years of service.

More than 50 staff has provided 20 or more years of dedicated service to NJ WIC participants.

Thanks to all staff who participated in this fun event! ■



WHERE DO THE MOST EXPERIENCED NJ LOCAL AGENCY STAFF WORK? — Jersey City tops the list with six of 20 staff recognized for 30 or more years of service.



CHECK IT OUT — A preview of the WOW System was available for the 475 staff attending the NJ Annual Meeting. Pictured are Laurie Pappell presenting highlights to Abner Mateo of the Newark WIC Program, while Mike Kerns (North Highland) and Mary Moran of CMA provides a glimpse of the NJ operating system for meeting attendees.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (DC) WIC IS AWARDED A 2014 USDA BREASTFEEDING PERFORMANCE BONUS AWARD

By Paulette Thompson, MS, RDN, CLS; State Breastfeeding Coordinator

The DC WIC Program is very proud to announce that it has received a 2014 Breastfeeding Performance Bonus Award from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

The award, announced on September 8 at the opening of the National WIC Association Breastfeeding Conference in Atlanta, recognizes DC WIC's outstanding achievement in improving breastfeeding exclusivity rates. The District of Columbia successfully raised the percentage of infants exclusively breastfed from 5.5 percent in 2012 to 7.6 percent in 2013. In addition to exclusivity rates, initiation rates are also increasing in DC WIC. We are excited that in the past year our initiation rate (based on women enrollees), topped 51 percent, with more women in DC WIC now initiating breastfeeding than not breastfeeding.

Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding is a priority for all WIC agencies and staff across the nation, so DC is extremely honored to be one of

six states acknowledged this year for its achievements. Many factors contribute to these gains, but at the top of the list is the dedication of all of our staff to the importance of breastfeeding for the health of our moms and babies.

The award of approximately \$112,000 will help us to continue to expand and enhance our peer counselor program and other breastfeeding support services. Additionally, the DC Department of Health has also been awarded a \$30,000 grant from the National Association of County and City Health Officials to be used to increase access to breastfeeding peer counselors in predominantly African-American neighborhoods through a partnership with the DC Breastfeeding Coalition and Children's National Health System. Partnering with organizations in the community allows DC WIC the opportunity to reach more women and provide the encouragement and support they need to achieve their breastfeeding goals. ■

VIRGINIA'S ALEXANDRIA WIC CELEBRATES BREASTFEEDING

The ladies at Virginia's Alexandria WIC office have been busy promoting breastfeeding through their informative and interactive breastfeeding boards. They have re-created the USA 2013 CDC breastfeeding report card, a beautiful timeline of vintage breastfeeding photos (to represent breastfeeding throughout the century), famous quotes to inspire breastfeeding mothers, and even a collage of famous breastfeeding women.

For this year's breastfeeding celebrations they tied into the theme of "Breastfeeding: A Winning Goal" and made World Cup trophies (all breastfeeding mothers deserve one) and flags from their clients' countries. When asked how they feel about breastfeeding, it was unanimously answered with "It is not just a life goal but it is a worldwide goal to have every woman be supported either in their families or workplaces to breastfeed all of their children for as long as they want and where/however they want." ■



Check out the colorful and creative breastfeeding bulletin boards created by Alexandria WIC.

WIC SUCCESS STORY: WEST VIRGINIA'S MONONGALIA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT WIC PROGRAM SUPPORTS BREASTFEEDING MOM TO BECOME MILK DONOR

Amanda Ejimofor, a Monongalia County (WV) WIC participant and mother of six breastfed children, found herself in uncharted territory with her seventh child. Her full-term newborn had to spend several weeks in the NICU, and in order to provide breast milk, this experienced breastfeeding mom would have to pump for the first time. She promptly contacted her WIC Breastfeeding Counselor, Lynne Ryan, IBCLC, and soon Amanda was diligently pumping away with a borrowed WIC Lactina breast pump.

With so much breastfeeding experience, Amanda had a great understanding of supply and demand and what it takes to stimulate production, and she wanted to be sure she had enough milk for her baby. She quickly established a plentiful supply, enough for her baby and then some! At three weeks, her baby was still in the hospital but due to come home soon. During a meeting with Lynne, Amanda shared that she had so much extra milk that her freezer was full and she had begun throwing away expressed milk. She preferred to donate the extra milk and had begun the screening process, but she had no place to store the milk until she could accumulate the required minimum donation of 200 ounces.

Lynne couldn't bear the thought of those precious drops going down the drain, and she knew there was a small, deep freezer in the break room. It was currently empty except for a few Lean Cuisines. She checked with her director, Anne MacBride, and they confirmed that CDC and OSHA recommendations agree that human milk is not among the body fluids that require separate refrigeration. Breast milk can be safely stored with other foods. Lynne offered Amanda use of the freezer until she had enough milk to donate and ship. Within a few weeks Amanda had 130 two-ounce containers of frozen expressed breast milk (EBM) in the freezer. More than enough for donation!

Amanda is donating her milk through the Ohio Milk Bank. She has gone through a thorough screening process that includes blood work. All costs, including shipping, are covered by the milk bank. Amanda said that donating her milk is "a privilege, not unlike donating bone marrow, which I never had the opportunity to do. Since I have the opportunity....it's about opportunity. When opportunities come around, you have to take them."

Monongalia County Health Department WIC is so glad they were able to offer support to Amanda as well as to help her take advantage of the opportunity to help other babies in intensive care. Because she was so motivated to provide the best for her own baby, she was able to help others babies who can benefit greatly from human milk. ■



SHARING GOLD — Lynne Ryan, IBCLC (left) and Monongalia County WIC participant Amanda Ejimofor have been working together through seven pregnancies to ensure Amanda's babies have the best. Now, through the support of the WIC breastfeeding peer counselor program, Amanda has committed to help other infants through the breastmilk donor bank.

BABY-FRIENDLY HOSPITALS IN DELAWARE

By Ida Lewis IBCLC, RLC Breastfeeding Coordinator
Kent and Sussex County, Delaware

Delaware WIC is pleased to announce that the State has two hospitals that are designated as Baby-Friendly. Beebe Healthcare received the Baby-Friendly Designation in January, followed by Bayhealth Kent General Hospital in August. Delaware has three other hospitals working towards the Baby-Friendly designation — Christiana Health Care Systems, Bayhealth Milford Memorial Hospital and St. Francis Hospital. The Breastfeeding Coalition of Delaware is working hard to have all hospitals and birthing centers become Baby-Friendly in Delaware. Delaware WIC is an active member of the coalition and their peer counselors have contributed to resources that these hospitals may use to achieve the Baby-Friendly designation.

Breastfeeding is widely viewed as the optimal feeding method for infants among professional nursing and medical organizations. Its health benefits have been comprehensively studied and documented for both infants and mothers. Hospitals and birthing centers strongly influence the outcomes for mothers who choose to breastfeed by establishing effective breastfeeding behaviors immediately after birth and during the hospital stay.

According to Dr. Lubuck of the International Lactation Consultant Association, a mere 12 weeks of exclusive breastfeeding could result in a health care savings of approximately \$600 per newborn.

The Baby-Friendly USA initiative outlines 10 steps to successful breastfeeding. Although these steps have been successfully supported in practice, they can be difficult to implement due to a variety of factors, including resistance to change. Specific steps generate more barriers to overcome than others, namely exclusive breastfeeding without supplementation or pacifiers, rooming-in for 23 out of 24 hours, and skin-to-skin contact with a parent immediately after birth and during the hospital stay.

Finally, the Affordable Health Care Act sites breastfeeding as a valuable source of nutrition and the first line for disease prevention in infants during the first year of life. ■

WEST VIRGINIA'S VALLEY HEALTH WIC PROGRAM HAS 40TH CELEBRATION FOR THE WIC PROGRAM

By Jenna Rose, MA, RD, LD, Valley Nutrition and Outreach Coordinator

In September, West Virginia's Valley Health Huntington and Charleston WIC sites hosted open house celebrations for WIC's 40th anniversary. Both celebrations were well attended by participants and our community partners. At the Huntington site, Senator Joe Manchin, III and Congressman Nick Rahal, II sent a greeting that was read and displayed at the event. Wes Holden from Senator Jay Rockefeller's office attended the celebration in Charleston along with representatives from many local community partner agencies.

Both open house events provided information regarding WIC Program eligibility and benefits, food and recipe tastings for WIC food benefits, a display of the food benefits for the fully breastfeeding mothers and babies, and a table of activities for children in attendance. Participants and community partners enjoyed the events and tasted new recipes that contained WIC foods. Recipe books were distributed to WIC participants. ■



THE BIG 4-0 — Everyone enjoyed activities and snacks to acknowledge the success and contribution of WIC.

NEW JERSEY'S VNA HEALTH GROUP WIC COOKING WITH WHOLE GRAINS

The recent inclusion of whole wheat pasta in the WIC Food Package presented an opportunity for WIC participants to learn new dishes. To display cooking options with this new item, a pasta primavera food demonstration was conducted in New Jersey's VNA Health Group's New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, and Freehold clinics during the month of August. The colorful dish that includes broccoli, carrots, zucchini or yellow squash, whole wheat pasta, milk, cheese, flour, butter or margarine was prepared by Nutrition Educator Julia Sotomayor.



PASTA, ANYONE? — Julia Sotomayor presenting the final product: Pasta Primavera.

Over the course of three days, 72 WIC participants, including children and infants 10 months old and up, tasted this simple but nutritious dish. The tasting spurred several positive reactions from the group such as "The meal was very tasty and it will be something new for us to cook for dinner" and "We're making it tonight."

Food demonstrations are helping WIC participants develop their cooking skills and the confidence to try new dishes using the WIC Food Package. In addition, they help participants overcome food stereotypes, such as the thought that whole wheat pasta tastes very nutty and grainy. Due to the demonstration, participants now know that whole wheat pasta is smooth and light, making it easier to get more fiber into their



LEARNING TO COOK — WIC participants learned valuable lessons at the Freehold clinic food demonstration.

PENNSYLVANIA'S BI-COUNTY WIC'S BUSY SUMMER

By Laurie Huff, Outreach Coordinator, Bi-County WIC Program, CDC, A Division of HOPE Enterprises, INC

With autumn setting in and winter fast approaching, Pennsylvania's Bi-County WIC takes a look back to reflect on several events they organized over the summer months. On a chilly Saturday morning in June, Bi-County joined forces with "Mindful Harvest" to educate the public about the importance of fruits and vegetables. Side by side they manned a colorful stand at a very busy Farmers' Market in the heart of downtown Williamsport. WIC staff issued 50-plus sets of Farmers' Market checks to qualifying participants and Mindful Harvest made it possible for each young child to receive a \$2 token to make their own special purchase at the market. Nutrition Education materials and recipes were distributed to anyone interested in new ideas to help them utilize their fresh produce. Meanwhile, Mindful Harvest, a local grass roots group interested in teaching the value of planting, growing and harvesting organic vegetables and fruits, encouraged attendees to consider growing their own garden. They also offered sample tasting of exceptionally prepared organic fruits and vegetables.

In early August, Bi-County WIC held its first annual "Big Latch" in honor of World Breastfeeding Week. Gathered at the WIC office, a dozen breastfed babies nursed simultaneously to celebrate this worldwide event. Various members of the general public, along with professional community leaders, were on hand to offer their support and encouragement of breastfeeding. Some of the attendees included WIC nursing moms, lactation consultants, hospital staff from Susquehanna Health Care Systems, breastfeeding peer counselors and staff from the Nurse Family Partnership Program. Refreshments were served, door prizes were offered, and a fun time was had by all.

Throughout the summer months, a representative from the Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) partnered with Bi-County to educate WIC participants on various nutrition lessons and encouraged involvement with the Penn State affiliated program; this was an appreciated addition to the WIC office.

2014 was a very busy year for Bi-County with all the positive exposure in the community. We plan to make 2015 just as successful! ■

WV Partners with Mineral County Library continued from page 1 children were given some of the foods from the story: "orange twiglets from Jupiter" (carrots); "moonsquirers" (tomatoes); and "green drops from Greenland" (peas).

A food science experiment rounded out the day to follow the theme for the summer reading program - "Fizz, Boom, Read." With an empty water bottle, one package of yeast, sugar and warm water, the children facilitated the chemical reaction to inflate a balloon.

Aside from the WIC and library partnership sharing resources to host larger, more interactive programming, the event supported the mission of each organization in an interactive and educational way. ■

VIRGINIA'S HAMPTON WIC PROGRAM BREASTFEEDING CELEBRATION A SUCCESS

Virginia's Hampton WIC Program held its annual breastfeeding celebration in honor of World Breastfeeding Week on August 7, at the Healthy Families Partnership in downtown Hampton. The event was hosted by Hampton WIC Nutritionist/Breastfeeding Coordinator Liz Burroughs and Breastfeeding Peer Counselors Michelene Menapace and Gina Chandler. Vendors participating in the event included representatives from Anthem HealthKeepers Plus, Diaper Junction, Hampton Health Department Immunization and Car Seat Programs, Hampton WIC Program Nutritionists and Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, Hampton Parks & Recreation, La Leche League, Breastfeeding Mamas, VA Premier Health Plan, and Hampton's Healthy Families Partnership.

More than 20 moms and moms-to-be attended the event. Attendees were able to pick up breastfeeding information and other pertinent information and resources for moms and moms-to-be. Moreover, the attendees were given the opportunity to talk with the vendors at tables set up throughout the room. There were several vendors who also did group presentations. The attendees enjoyed fruit, vegetables, and other healthy snacks along with a delicious cake. Raffle prizes were awarded to many lucky participants. Everyone had a fun and relaxing time while receiving valuable information and resources.

The Hampton WIC Program plans to expand next year's breastfeeding celebration with more vendors, music, and exercise demonstrations. Our goal is to promote breastfeeding and increase breastfeeding rates in the City of Hampton and the Hampton WIC Program. ■



Enjoying the celebration are Gina Chandler, Liz Burroughs, and Michelene Menapace.

LOGAN (WV) WIC STAFF CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF WIC

West Virginia's Logan County WIC staff celebrated 40 years of WIC with fun while informing the public about WIC and its benefits. What better way is there to celebrate in the fall than by having a tailgating event with a Chili Fest, which demonstrated what fun you can have eating healthy and trying new foods.

The scent of spices and the sound of music filled the air to help rouse the community to come celebrate WIC. The sight of street-side tailgating with trucks covered in football team spirit décor enticed people to stop and see what the excitement was about. Even a very visible picture window display of a huge layered cake was used to attract attention and show the WIC growth over its 40 years on each layer. WIC and breastfeeding information was offered to those who stopped by. The local radio station graciously gave free air-time of the event.

The Chili Fest was geared to educate people on legumes — what they are, how healthy they are and how good they taste, especially when used in chili recipes. Taste testing of several different types of chili was offered to highlight ways of "thinking outside the box" when preparing foods like legumes. Even white great northern beans and chicken were ingredients in one type of chili.

Everyone seemed to have a great time. After all, having fun is the best way to learn. ■



TAILGATING IN CELEBRATION OF WIC — Pictured (left to right) are Sherry Abbott, Jamie Mullins, Yvonne Mauk, Gladys Harvey and Annie Rose, who not only show West Virginia spirit, but celebrated WIC's 40th Anniversary.

NEW JERSEY'S VNA HEALTH GROUP WIC REACHES OUT

The population of Monmouth County saw the existing services of New Jersey's VNA Health Group WIC Program at a Baby Fair Event offered at CentraState Health Care System in October. WIC offered professional outreach to many families attending the fair.

Kristie Fawkes, the dynamic, new supervisor on the WIC team, spoke to a crowded audience about the benefits of the WIC Program and the provision of services at its new strategic location in the vibrant city of Freehold. Susan Mayer, Breastfeeding Manager, voiced breastfeeding promotion and support in WIC, while Victoria Huey, WIC Generalist, provided information about eligibility requirements, phone numbers where to make appointments, and addressed barriers and myths that may keep potential WIC participants from participating. Julia Sotomayor, Nutrition Educator, showed potential participants the various nutrient-dense foods in the WIC package.

The event, which lasted more than two hours with 50 vendors, seemed short for the avid attendees looking for the newest information in maternity and available community services. ■



TELLING THE WIC STORY — Pictured (left to right) are VNA Health Group WIC employees Susan Mayer, Julia Sotomayor, Kristie Fawkes, and Victoria Huey at a Baby Fair.

NEW JERSEY'S PASSAIC WIC CELEBRATES WORLD FOOD DAY

On October 16, in honor of World Food Day, NJ's Passaic WIC Program held a food drive at Passaic City Hall. A table was set up with nutrition information, a nutrition quiz and World Food Day information. Employees were encouraged to donate non-perishable food items to be given to Salvation Army in Passaic. The event was set up by Passaic WIC Nutritionist Gloria Lobato. ■



FOOD FOR ALL — Passaic WIC Nutritionist Gloria Lobato staff WIC's World Food Day table.

PENNSYLVANIA WIC SUCCESS STORY: PUT TO THE TEST...YIELDS BREASTFEEDING SUCCESS!

By Barbara Warner, Outreach Coordinator
Erie County WIC Program

A breastfeeding experience that didn't start out too well turned positive for a first-time mom at the Erie County WIC Program in Pennsylvania. Jackie was adamant she was going to breastfeed; she knew it was the healthiest option for her child. After being given IV fluids for 30 hours during delivery, her milk was a little delayed coming in, but the hospital's lactation consultant helped her latch the baby before discharge. Still, after three weeks of exclusive breastfeeding, little Kathryn, was not back to her birth weight. Mom had a good team set up to help. Her physician kept close tabs on her and brought Kathryn in for weight checks. WIC nutritionists met with her, giving breastfeeding and nutritional advice, along with lots of encouragement. She met with the St. Vincent Health Center's lactation consultant, who recommended various herbs to try, and gave a prescription for a pump. With WIC and the consultant, a pumping plan was developed to assist in building mom's supply. WIC provided the hospital grade pump. Despite all these efforts, when Kathryn didn't get back to birth weight at beyond a month old, her doctor had Mom supplement, giving the infant about 25% of nutrients from formula.

Jackie was extremely motivated to get back to exclusive breastfeeding. She kept breastfeeding logs and also started attending the Breastfeeding Support Group at St. Vincent's and this really helped sustain her through this struggle. The best advice she received was from her mom who told her to just follow her instincts. With her team behind her, Jackie was able to discontinue the formula when Kathryn was 6 months old. She didn't even need to pump any longer; Kathryn was thriving at the breast. At 16 months old, she is still breastfeeding a couple of times daily.

Congratulations to all on this team effort to give baby what's best! ■



SUCCESS — Kathryn at 8 months old, thinking, "I knew you could do it Mom!"

TRINITAS WIC CELEBRATES NEW JERSEY FARMERS' MARKET WEEK

By Anita Otokiti, Trinitas WIC Director

National Farmers' Market Week was declared August 3 -9, by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. This has been a tradition for USDA for 15 years, and is a time to celebrate our nation's farmers, farmers' markets and the communities that host events. Across the nation, officials are visiting events to encourage families to consume fresh fruits and vegetables from local farms.

Manny Grova, President of Elizabeth Council, was on-site at Trinitas WIC on August 1. As Grova tossed corn salad, he informed guests about the local market operated by the Elizabeth Partnership each week. Markets are open to the public, senior citizens, and WIC participants who receive vouchers that must be redeemed at the local farmers' market. The vouchers are valid June 1 through November 30. Connecting cities with farms is exactly what Trinitas WIC seeks to accomplish by referring families to the local markets and conducting bi-lingual education sessions and food demonstrations during the peak growing season.

Farmer George Asprocolas of Asprocolas Acres of Millstone donated fresh produce for nutritionists to use to showcase the featured item of the month. In June, the select item was berries; July featured melons, and corn and cucumbers were the stars for August.

NJ WIC has a low redemption rate for farmers' market vouchers of about 50 percent. However, Trinitas WIC Director Anita Otokiti indicated that Trinitas WIC has an excellent redemption rate of nearly 90 percent.

Nutritionist Andrea Martinez led a food demonstration featuring various summer squash such as the yellow crookneck, patty-pans and zucchinis. Preparation technique and nutrient value were discussed as participants examined the displays. Summer Corn Salad was prepared as parts of corn were identified. Fresh cooked corn, tomatoes, cucumbers and onions were tossed in a light oil and vinegar-based dressing. Volunteers enjoyed evaluating one bite as they discussed how various corns and squashes were used to prepare favorite cultural foods. ■



TO MARKET, TO MARKET — Lorena Mora from Asprocolas Acres displays farmers' market vouchers and produce on site at Trinitas WIC.



TASTY BUNCH — Stirring up some tasty recipes using fresh produce are (left to right) WIC Nutritionist Andrea Martinez, Elizabeth Council Members President Manny Grova, and Lorena Mora of Asprocolas Acres.

VIRGINIA'S WIC BREASTFEEDING COORDINATORS CELEBRATE 40 YEARS

Local Agency Breastfeeding Coordinators convened with WIC staff and coordinators from 35 health districts to celebrate WIC's 40th anniversary during the 2014 Virginia WIC Conference in October. The theme of this year's conference was "Work Site Wellness: Keeping Employees Engaged." Local Agency Breastfeeding Coordinators attended informative sessions to enhance their knowledge and clinical skills related to breastfeeding (Breastfeeding the Pre-Term Infant), nutrition (Breastfeeding Food Package), Crossroads (Electronic WIC Applications), and panel discussions with fathers, health care providers, and more. All the updates and learning opportunities were upbeat and inspiring!

Virginia's WIC Breastfeeding Teams, including Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, are focused on achieving Healthy Family 2020 goals by partnering with other Virginia Department of Health Divisions and breastfeeding advocates within local communities, such as birthing facilities, hospital lactation services, child care centers, home visitors, health promotion (smoking cessation) and violence prevention specialists (domestic violence and safe sleep). There is always much to learn and do in order to keep families safe and healthy. It helps to receive new ideas and direction from the Virginia WIC Conference that will help more WIC families in the years to come. ■



Breastfeeding staff from across the state gathered for a 40th anniversary celebration.

NEW JERSEY'S NORTH HUDSON WIC PROGRAM "CHEFS IN TRAINING"

On October 9, New Jersey's North Hudson Community Action Corporation WIC Program participated in an in-house knife training seminar. Executive Chef Melissa Rigas Greeley educated the staff on proper knife handling skills ranging from appropriate cutting boards to the correct way to cut a pineapple. These new skills will be especially useful to the nutrition department during food demonstrations and WIC events.

The Executive Chef described the different styles of knives and their various uses. There was a brief demonstration on knife safety and the efficiency in pairing specific knives with specific foods. She taught the group simpler ways to cut a variety of fruits and vegetables such as mangos and bell peppers. The demonstration also educated the staff on diverse cut styles such as julienne and batonnet. The nutritionists were able to put their knowledge to test by trying the different types of knives on a range of fruits and vegetables, with some assistance from Chef Melissa. To conclude the session, Chef Melissa made a quick and healthy dessert with yogurt, honey, pistachios and mango, for the staff to recommend to participants. The afternoon proved to be educational as well as full of fun and good food. ■



CUT THIS WAY — Executive Chef Melissa Rigas Greeley demonstrating proper cutting skills.

VIRGINIA'S FAIRFAX WIC PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FATHERS FOR WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK

Virginia's Fairfax County WIC Program hosted a family fun event on August 9, at an indoor soccer field to commemorate this year's World Breastfeeding Week theme of "Breastfeeding – A Winning Goal for Life."

Fathers and mothers with young children and infants participated in soccer workshops and obstacle courses and free play on the soccer field. A goal of the event was to honor fathers who support breastfeeding. We did this with food, sports and raffle prizes. Seventy-five people attended the three-hour event. Eleven sponsors generously provided age-appropriate workshops and activities at the event, as well as food, gift cards, samples of breastfeeding products and online promotion of the event. WIC breastfeeding peer counselors provided nursing bra fittings, breastfeeding information and pumping tips. Our WIC IBCLC staff provided private consultations with nursing moms.

Many attendees had so much fun they asked if we would be doing this again! ■

HERE'S TO DADS — Fairfax County WIC achieved its goal of celebrating fathers during World Breastfeeding Week festivities.



The deadline for the Spring issue of MARWIC TIMES is February 17, 2015. Submit articles, photos/captions and calendar events to your State editor.



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